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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

50X1

COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT NO.	
SUBJECT	1. Propaganda and Control of Information Media 2. Radio Jamming Station near Sofia	DATE DISTR.	5 October 1955
DATE OF INFO.		NO. OF PAGES	3
PLACE ACQUIRED		REQUIREMENT NO.	
DATE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	

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LIBRARY SUBJECT AND AREA CODES (16)

3-02-0406 10/55  
893.1  
893.11 20M  
753.71 20M  
753.636 1/D(BI)

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STATE	#X	ARMY	#X	NAVY	#X	AIR	#X	FBI	#	AEC		X
(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "#".)												

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 7 Sept. 1955

SUBJECT 1. Propaganda and Control of Information  
Media

NO. OF PAGES 2

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Propaganda and Control of Information Media

1. Bulgarian propaganda, all of which was directed from Moscow, had the same aims as Soviet propaganda. These aims were the following:
  - a. To convince the population that the USSR was the protector of all the peoples' democracies.
  - b. To instill hatred of the US into the population.
  - c. To convince the population that the governmental systems of Western Europe and the US were such that they could not exist without war; further, that the only way the West could prevent an economic crisis was to instigate a third world war.
  - d. To convince the population that enormous progress had been made in industrialization and in the improvement of living conditions.
  - e. To convince the population of the great help given by the Soviet Union.
2. Although propaganda about the Soviet Union's help was constantly drummed into the Bulgarians, they realized that they were being exploited cruelly by the so-called "big brother" and that Georgi Dimitrov's statement that "the Soviet Union is to Bulgaria what the sun and water is to every living thing" was a lie. Bulgarians became very bored with the monotonous propaganda; and, as a reaction, huge numbers of persons filled the theaters showing Western films, which occasionally reached Bulgaria, while the theaters showing Soviet films were almost empty.
3. Only Party members were appointed to propaganda posts but they were usually afraid of their own shadow and trembled at the thought that they might even possibly deviate from the general Party line in the propaganda effort.

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4. Critics and authors of books constantly worried about the way in which their works would be received by the Party; they were expected to follow only basic thoughts within a certain frame and also to saturate their works with Party ideas. The Ministry of Culture made decisions on all problems dealing with the publication of books but these decisions were always made by a committee, never by any one individual.
5. Control of the daily press, especially when Western news items were involved, was the function of Pravda. In order to prevent contradictory news items from reaching the public, all Western news first passed through a fine sieve in Moscow. When a Western news item had been published by Pravda, Bulgarian newspapers could then extract it, translate it literally, and publish it in Rabotnichesko Delo or another Bulgarian newspaper. The fear of making a mistake in interpretation was so great that newspapers made these extracts from Pravda 24 hours after the news items had been broadcast by radio in Moscow. Because of this, source claims that any 10-year-old child was qualified to be the foreign news editor of any Bulgarian newspaper if he knew the Russian language well enough. Internal news items were always very boring, and, usually, such subjects as "Tractor Driver Ivan Stoykov Plowed 10 Decares" filled the pages of the newspapers every day.
6. Western news items were also obtained by listening to Western broadcasts but this was difficult because of the very strong jamming. Source believes that these broadcasts, when intelligible, had a very strong following in spite of the fact that not everyone had a radio.

Radio Jamming Station near Sofia

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7. [redacted] riding streetcar No. 5 from Sofia to Knyazhevo (N 42-40, E 23-14), he was told by an acquaintance, when the streetcar stopped at the "Petar Beran" stop, that a jamming station was located nearby. The acquaintance pointed out some antennae, which were visible from the streetcar, and [redacted] they belonged to the jamming station.

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